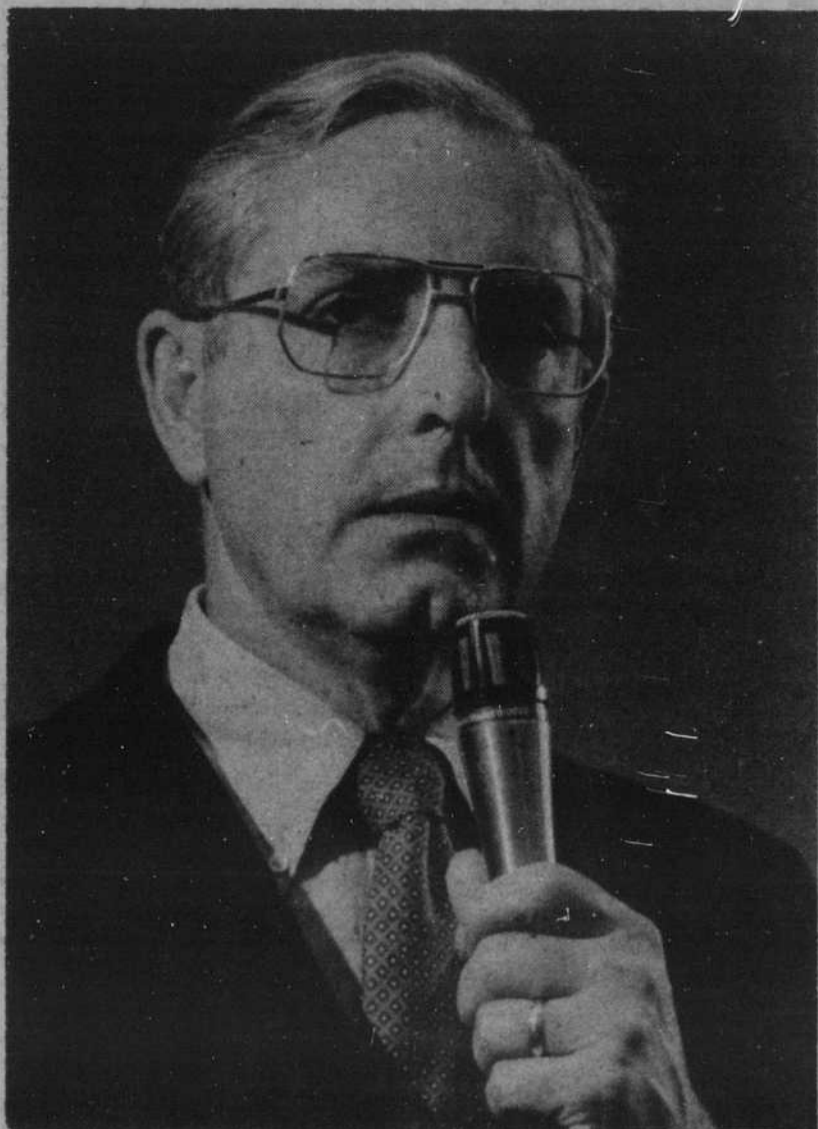


In Eugene appearances

Atiyeh plugs embattled tax proposal



Governor Victor Atiyeh

By KEVIN HARDEN
Of the Emerald

Gov. Victor Atiyeh said Friday that Oregonians will begin to feel the recent change in state government where they need it most: in their bank accounts.

Atiyeh, in Eugene for his first public speech since his inauguration earlier this month, told nearly 200 GOP supporters that his administration will be marked by challenges to the people to work as a team to solve state problems, instead of relying on government to do all the work.

By working as a team, he said, Oregonians will accomplish more at a lower cost.

"Your government now belongs to you again," Atiyeh told the supporters. "But if we are to work as a team, then you must work as hard as I work."

During his 45-minute speech, Atiyeh made a pitch for his embattled tax plan, which has been criticized by most state legislators since it was unveiled nearly three weeks ago.

The plan, described as "a revised Ballot Measure 6", could have been part of the reason for his campaign success, Atiyeh explained.

Atiyeh presented his tax package with the idea of sending it to the voters by April 3 for a special election. At a press conference earlier Friday, Atiyeh said that

goal could be met, even by stubborn legislators.

"I find it difficult to believe that they (the legislators) can't get this tax plan moving when it's already drafted. All they have to do is go through it and take a look at it."

Atiyeh compared his request to the special legislative session called last summer by then Gov. Bob Straub to create an alternative tax relief measure that was defeated in November.

That session presented a tax plan to voters in 10 days, Atiyeh explained, "And I still believe that if they want to, they'll do it."

Although most of the criticism has come from Democratic legislators, Atiyeh said the tax plan is not a partisan issue.

"The matter of taxation and how it affects Oregonians is not a partisan issue. Independents, Democrats and Republicans are all in the same boat, so I have no intention of making it a partisan issue," he explained.

Atiyeh said he also would support the tax plan by testifying before the joint House and Senate Revenue Committee if it looked like the plan was about to fail.

During the gubernatorial campaign, Atiyeh supported the 1.5 percent property tax limitation. After the defeat of Ballot Measure 6, Atiyeh told voters he would propose a tax plan similar to that limitation.

"What I said (during the campaign) was what I was going to do — nothing's hidden," Atiyeh said. "I said what I was going to do about the tax plan. I was going to index income to fight inflation, I was going to return the surplus to the people and I was going to come back with a revised Ballot Measure 6. It's no secret."

"That is what I told Oregonians I would do. And I believe that is why they elected me governor. I hope the message gets to the Oregon Legislature."

The tax plan "is what Oregonians want," and the longer the Legislature looks at the proposal, the more they will like it, Atiyeh said.

Any attempts to change the plan could be politically hazardous he warned. "I'm not saying they ought not to look at it, or that they ought not to change it if they think that is right. I'm just saying that it's risky business."

Atiyeh left little doubt with the audience about what kind of governor he plans to be. Some stands he will take as governor will be controversial, he explained, but they will be for the good of the state.

"I'm going to tell you where I stand on any issue, and if it's controversial, it's controversial. I was not elected just to make easy decisions or to duck hard issues."

Health fund applications due

Graduate teaching fellows who plan to request support from a special health-care fund have one week to submit their applications to the Graduate Teaching Fellows Federation.

Any student officially designated as a GTF, or who was a GTF during fall term 1978, may apply for Health Fund Support. The \$25,000 fund was raised through private sources to help GTFs meet medical expenses.

Oregon law prevents GTFs and other part-time employees from participating in a subsidized state health plan, but the University and the federation are working to-

gether through a health care committee to investigate alternatives to such a subsidized plan.

The health-care money each GTF receives depends on the total number of applicants and the number of applicants with dependents, according to the federation. The money will be divided equally among applicants, except that GTFs with one dependent may get one and one-half shares, and GTFs with two or more dependents may receive two shares.

GTFs already covered by the insurance plan of a non-GTF spouse can receive no more than the additional cost of insuring them under that plan, although

those with one or more children may receive an additional one-half share.

Documentation must be sent along with the support application, and GTFs who have questions about the plan may call the union office at 344-0832 or Dan Zwick at 686-4743. Applications must be returned to the GTFF office, 868 E. 13th Ave., by Feb. 5.

Hamil taken off critical list

Eugene City Councilor Bill Hamil continues to progress after being taken off the critical list and moved to the progressive cardiac unit at Sacred Heart Hospital Friday.

"He's progressing and in satisfactory condition," a hospital representative said Sunday. Hamil had been in the intensive care unit for 10 days.

Hamil represents Ward 5 (north Eugene) and was just re-elected for his second term on the council. He is recovering from a heart attack and ensuing open heart surgery.

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For more information and applications contact:

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172 Oregon Hall 686-3206

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